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Finance Committee Minutes 06-11-2003

ARLINGTON FINANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

7:30 PM Town hall hearing room

6/11/03

ATTENDEES:

Janowitz*	Feinleib*	O'Riordan*	O'Neill*	Mahoney
DeCoursey*	Connors	Simmons	Morrisette*	
Tosti*	Foskett*	Deyst*	Ronan	
Piandes	Franclemont*	Jones*	Olsen*	
DuBois*	Howard*	Fanning*	Tosi	Kneeland*

* Indicates present

VISITORS: Town Manager Nancy Galkowski, Town Counsel John Maher, Personnel Director Caryn Cove, Minuteman Tech School Committee Member Erin Phelps.

MINUTEMAN: DeCoursey requested reconsideration of the Finance Committee's previous vote for \$2 million. He recommended approval of the "education-reform" assessment of \$2,008,143. Although the budgeted expenditures have not changed, the revenues have increased, including a land sale, and the formula for assessment changed from past practice. This change, which benefits Arlington, has been an Arlington objective for several years. VOTED to approve the assessment. Unanimous. DeCoursey left meeting to introduce Minuteman discussion to Town meeting.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: Galkowski stated that an arbitration decision to approve a 3% cost-of-living allowance, but no insurance co-pay had been received for the firefighters. A similar decision is expected for the patrolmen. She provided a descriptive memo and a substitute motion. She also provided a memo from outside counsel stating that neither the Finance Committee nor the Town Meeting is bound to accept this decision. Members believe that the co-pay provision (affecting doctor visits and medicine but not premiums), already accepted by the non-uniformed unions, is important to controlling medical insurance costs. All unions must accept before the co-pay provision can be administered. VOTED to not approve the arbitration award for either union. Unanimous.

OVERRIDE CONTINGENT BUDGET: The Board of Selectmen voted (3-1-1) to appropriate only \$3 million should the voters approve the \$4 million override Saturday. Since the deficit is now \$7 million rather than \$8 million the Finance Committee discussed supporting the Board of Selectmen, which might improve the override's chances, limiting appropriation to \$3.5 million consistent with the original policy of half cuts and half tax increase, and appropriation of \$4 million, as approved by the voters. VOTED to support the Board of Selectmen, 10-3. The Finance Committee discussed whether to reconsider the previous vote to appropriate the recent \$1 million by the O'Neill formula. VOTED to distribute the \$1 million and the \$3 million, according to the 75% Schools, 25% non-school formula established by the override vote. 11-1-1. This required reducing the non-school "givebacks" by \$190,000. The Finance Committee discussed various possibilities and settled on the following adjustments to the \$3 million distribution plan provided by the manager:

Item	Amount	Vote
Eliminate comptroller distribution for software	\$5,000	Unanimous
Eliminate postage distribution	\$25,000	Unanimous
Eliminate revaluation distribution	\$10,000	Unanimous
Delete transportation study funding	\$20,000	12-1
Reduce distribution to Public Works	\$42,557	Unanimous
Delete animal control officer	\$16,237	Unanimous
Reduce patrolmen and firemen	\$71,206	12-1

Total \$190,000

Note that Tosti recused himself from this discussion and turned the chair over to Foskett.

TRANSFERS: DuBois to investigate a transfer request from the BOS. Olsen to investigate a transfer request from Public Works. Recommendations due Monday.

RESERVE FUND BALANCE \$252,532

Peter B. Howard
Secretary